



**Statement of Subcommittee Chairman John Katko (R-NY)  
Transportation Security Subcommittee**

*"Pipelines: Securing the Veins of America's Economy"*  
*April 19, 2016*

Remarks as Prepared

Over 2.6 million miles of pipeline run through the United States carrying oil and natural gas operated by approximately 3,000 companies. The integrity of this complex network of pipelines is critical not only to our economy, but in keeping our cars running and our stoves burning.

Following the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, responsibility for pipeline security shifted to the Transportation Security Administration while the Department of Transportation retained responsibility for pipeline safety. Although, the terms "safety" and "security" are often used interchangeably, the root causes for concern behind each of these concepts are fundamentally different and warrant differing approaches. While safety focuses on preventing and responding to accidents, security aims to thwart malicious actors with ill intentions from damaging or disrupting pipeline operations.

The threat to pipeline security has been deemed relatively low by the intelligence community. This is largely due to security measures put in place by operators and the extent to which a vast majority of the U.S. pipeline network is buried underground. However, we must remain diligent. Just because terrorists have not yet targeted pipelines for an attack does not mean they will not in the future.

In addition to physical attacks, we must also guard against cyber-attacks. Our adversaries, including North Korea, China, Russia and Iran, have shown a proclivity for launching sophisticated cyber-attacks against U.S. companies, banks, and critical infrastructure.

In March, the Justice Department indicted members of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps for hacking the operational control system of a small dam in my home state of New York. While there is no evidence that hackers have been able to penetrate the industrial control systems of pipelines, there have been several high profile incidents where the systems of global energy companies have been compromised and sensitive information fell into the wrong hands. As hackers become more sophisticated, we cannot discount the possibility that they may one day seek to intrude on the industrial control systems, disrupting the flow of oil and natural gas.

Although TSA has the authority to regulate pipeline security, they have chosen instead to pursue a more collaborative approach with the industry, that could serve as a model for other parts of the government.

However, I am concerned that TSA has not issued an update to the Pipeline Security Guidelines since 2011. I look forward to learning more about how TSA and industry stakeholders work together to ensure the security of our nation's pipelines.

I would like to thank everyone for being here today. I look forward to hearing the testimony from our distinguished panel of witnesses.

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